

[HELLO WORLD, a]

Testing... Testing...

[cut]

Two, Testing again... Testing with a longer microphone. Huh, okay. This thing is pretty cool, thank you, uh, Grandma for the early Christmas gift. Uh, the micro-

[cut]

Alright good. I am bringing these tapes to somebody I trust. I'm not gonna mention who right now, just in case. Uhm, just know that you will get these when you are supposed to. I'm sending all the tapes. Uhm, I know some of them are from back when I was... naive, and didn't quite understand the situation, but some of my observations are relevant, so you're getting those, and I'm... sorry for all you have to sit through. You can help, but, do it discreetly. And whatever you do, do not bring anyone else who is not already involved into this.

[cut]

You see about before, is that there seems to be, a miscommunication happening there. But that's kinda besides the point, uhm, I guess right now I'm gonna use this as a way to talk to the person who gave me the gift. Hello Grandma, hello, hello, hello. I guess I can mail some of those to you. Got some Christmas tunes going for you, and a, uh, radio... alright so there's no Christmas music, right now but, that, is Christmas time. [laughs] Uhmm, I hope everything is good with you. I'm gonna turn this off, 'cause, I'm sure you don't appreciate Cheech and Chong. Uhhhm, I just am going to grab some gifts, some early Christmas gift shopping, clearly, 'cause you know me. And I already have my gift from you, uh... so. Okay, it's two weeks before Christmas, so, I'm not. You know me. You know me. Uh, everything in my- in my life is good. For the most part. What's been going on? Uhhhhhm, Molly is good. I still don't have a girlfriend, but I still have my- I do have my dog, so that's- that's good. She's, great, as always. Uhhhm, what else, what else, what else, what else? Princeton is looking beautiful, uhm, as you know around this time of year it looks great the decorations went up, right after Thanksgiving, as they should, and uhm, really it looks great with the snow on the ground. It is raining a little bit right now, so that's kinda ruining my- my vibe, but, the snow is still there so, you should come visit. See what's - what it's like in my slice of the country. Eave though you're only a state away, but, you know it is a huge difference. Everybody here is much nastier, much faster drivers, it's really a fantastic place to be, you should check it out.

[cut]

Uhmm, I'm not- I'm gonna... (SILENCE WHILE VINNIE LISTENS TO THE RADIO) watch for them! So I really appreciate this gift, this thing is really cool, but I'm just not sure what... to do with it, do I just leave it on and talk about nothing? Do you wanna hear about what I'm doing this weekend, I can tell you. We're gonna go check out a movie, like I said I gotta Christmas shop,

I've got a couple people left. Uhhm, you want my grocery list? Gonna grab milk and eggs later. Let's find a really good (trails off) I really- I really do like this. This is cool, wow. It's almost like a phone, like, I can hold it up to my ear. Hi, how are you? Other than, you know, you can hear me but. I guess who doesn't love my voice. Hi, hello, yes, it 'tis I. Me, yes, my-oh-my, oh I had fun, thank me. (laughs) Sorry, maybe I'll go over and record that part out- I forget that I'm talking to Grandma, to you, instead of me-to me, on a microphone to me. Too many me's happening here. I am so sorry. I was just-

[cut]

Okay, I am back, I'm gonna try and make this a little less ridiculous for you. Hi, Grandma, Merry Christmas, thank you so much for the gift. It is really cool, I'm still playing around with it, I think I'm gonna... find a really, everyday use for this, I do wanna use this a lot, it's so awesome. I hope you are well, and I hope to see you soon, before the new year maybe, maybe right around Christmas, we'll set something up. I- you can come to see my new place, or we'll have a ball. anyway, I love you, I hope everything is good, I think I already said that, but, recording myself is freaking me out, right now. So I will talk to you soon, Merry Christmas blah, blah. Bla-

[cut]

(THE RADIO PLAYS IN THE BACKGROUND, AN ANNOUNCER ENDING "WINTER WONDERLAND")

Merry Christmas! Hey Grandma, Merry actual Christmas, I know I feel like 90% of these tapes so far have been me saying, "Merry Christmas," or "I love you," so lemme just get it out one more time, Merry Christmas. And I love you. (laughs) Uh, I'm currently out, going to breakfast, at the one place that is open on Christmas Day, 'cause I forgot to get anything in preparation for Christmas Day... foodwise. I got presents, you got some coming in, don't you worry, but no- no food. Uhm, today is going to be, a kinda quiet day, I have nothing really planned, no- no Santa gifts came, even though I left the lights on and left the cookies out, well I left a cookie out, I ate the other two that I left for him, but, I mean, come on, he's gonna hold a grudge against that- for no reason? He's lucky he got any! Seriously. Well, y'know I'd really like to come out and see you, like I said before, and like you said on the phone, just, uh, gets a little lonely, especially 'round the holidays. And, uh, well, tonight I'm going to uh, hang out with some of my friends from the university and we're kinda doing a, uh, transplant, friends Christmas, so uh there's a couple of us who-

[cut]

There's some in the area who don't really have families, some in the area are, getting it together, we got a turkey, and, uh, y'know some sides, we're making yams later, and... it'll be good, it'll be good. It's not quite the same. Anyway I will let you go, not that you have any obligation to listen to the whole thing, but I will let you go, (laughs) and I will talk to you soon. I'll give you a call, obviously, but, that's it. Bye.

[cut]

Uh, with this shrink, like I said I was going to do, and I see him next... Tuesda-

[cut]

December, yes, 26th, like I said, so happy December 26th, the day after Christmas! I ended up having a really nice time last night, uh, at the dinner that I mentioned yesterday, but on the tape, probably four seconds ago, so I'm sure you didn't forget, and if you did, we need to have a talk Grandma. Uhm, it was really nice, and, it felt... like a normal Christmas for the first time in a very very very long time. So I wanted to record that, just to let you know your grandson is not, losing his mind or, becoming a shut in- even though he's not, uh, right next to his family. And I hope that your Christmas was good, and give everyone out there my love, and I will talk to you soon. Bye.

[cut]

(A LONG MOMENT OF SILENCE)

January 15th, Happy New Year. I thought today I would take you on a uhm, an a- an audio tour, Of Princeton, uhh, since I don't have one of those fancy camera picture machines. Um, I really do like it here. It is, uh... [laughs] It's really weird. I know I keep saying it's weird as a transplant, but looking around it seems like everybody knows where they are and what they're doing and... I'm just kind of stumbling around looking at storefronts, hoping to find somebody I know, and I know, like, three people so that's probably not going to happen, but.. [sighs] So it is a nice, crisp, breezy day. It is about 12 in the afternoon for ya, so it's-it's nice and sunny. Um, let's see, I'm down on the corner here. Um, it's Witherspoon aaaaaannnd Nassau. And there's this jewelry store and it's got this really really really really big display out front [laughs] And if you look directly at it, I swear to god you'll go blind. It's just all awful, it's so decadent for no reason. Alright gonna keep moving here, uh, what else? Oh there's a little coffee shop, right at the end of the street I think you would like, uhm, if you ever come and visit me, if I ever call you. That-that is my fault... dammit. I'm sorry, I'm sorry for cursing also, Jesus- Oh, God! Um, okay. Let's start that over. I'm gonna just somehow record over that. There's a coffee shop that you would like, I think. I'll have to call and invite you sometime. There we go! [sigh] It's just good... having people who understand and- and listen and... know where you're coming from. And they love you, and I love our family, um, and I'm so thankful for everything you do, but there's just... something about this environment... I'm glad you pushed me to come. I don't... I don't know where I'd be, and uh, I love you. And I'm gonna call... just as soon as I get the phone set up, I will give you a call, and we'll talk, and I don't know what's gonna come first, the ability to afford stamps or my phone line, but whichever one happens, I swear to you I'm either gonna give the tapes to you or I'm gonna call you. But until then, let's continue on our tour. So down the street a little bit, I'm not actually giving you the live tour 'cause I can't fly, but down a few blocks there is a, uh, a little theater and they play like, one movie at a time, and it's awful art trash... and I don't want to say it too loud 'cause I think a lot of people here are awful art trash, so... that's what it is. But! I am gonna go and check it out, I know that they do like, midnight screenings every once in a while, and that sounds definitely up my alley since I don't sleep, and maybe I'll meet some like-minded nocturnal creatures like myself, and, um, what else? This school looks like Dracula's castle. Uh, that's across the street, so if you're looking where I am now, if you look right across the street, you'll see, um, big archways, there's like a main gate and two side gates on either side of it, and then way in the back is an ivy-covered building, which, I'm assuming is why it's an ivy-league school, makes sense to me. Um, and then you walk back and there's gardens and there's libraries and there's houses and students and, uh, funny, funny- funny story

here, they get just as wasted as every other college that I've ever seen. Um, so that's how the other half lives, by the way, it's just wasted just like the rest of us, so that's cool. Uh, what else? Ah! All the way down, past two churches- one I believe is episcopal, can't remember what the other one is- um, is a dirty, filthy sandwich shop, and it is constantly packed. Constantly. That's another place that's open, I think until one or two? And, uh, I'm gonna kind of creep around for friends there and see what- and see who I can pick up. And I know, I know, oh, bad influences! I won't pick up any bad influences, I have Jeff and Evan, they're helping me stay on the path that induces a stay on, so... I don't need to hear it from you, or Grandpa, or anybody else so thank you very much. [sigh] Anyway, I don't wanna keep bringing it up, but I just... want you to know that I think you helped me make the right decision, so... I'm not gonna keep going on about it, but I love you so much, um, and I'm gonna keep these tapes up even after I get to call you, just because I think it in- it in itself is- is pretty helpful, it... lets me kind of, reflect on the good things that have been going on, um, instead of stewing on bad things, which we all know that I do from time to time, so... [sigh] yeah. Princeton. Not bad.

January 18th. [sighs, background rustling] [yawning] Okay, okay, here we go. Period, January whatever I said. [sighs] Uh, lemme see here... It looks like it is... 6:30 a.m. [yawns] I just wanted to talk about what happened last night. I, uh, went to Princeton... You know, the town, not where I live. Because- who am I explaining this to? Uh, alright, let me just explain, to... me, I guess, to give myself a little clarity later down the road if I ever lose my memory or, y'know... any of the good stuff. I just like to hear myself talk, I think. I live in Princetown, the township, but usually I don't call my hometown "Princeton." The city- [cut]

-hang out, so. For me, I know what Princeton is. And now for me, on the tape, I know what Princeton is. I went to Princeton and I hung out, um, there's a movie theater there, and sometimes they play, y'know, older showings, um, and then a couple new releases, so I went and saw 2001: A Space Odyssey and that was... a trip and a half, so. After that I went and grabbed something to eat, and that was fine and dandy, and then I came home and [yawning] I don't even remember going to sleep, but there I was, sleeping... I guess, because I woke up now and here I am. And I fell asleep with my shoes on, on the floor by the couch. Not on the couch! Wasn't drinking, no drugs... weird. No dream, which is, y'know, also pretty fun, I just kinda... like an on/off switch! The light was on, then it was off, and now it's on again, so... that's that.

[HELLO WORLD, b]

Okay, let's try something a little more experimental here. Uhm.. [PAUSES AND SIGHS] I'm going to give you a call.

[SOUNDS OF WALKING, A NOISE INDICATING A PHONE BEING PICKED UP]

Hey! Good, how are you?

Yeah, yeah, I uh, I finally figured out how to, uh, you know, summon the cable guy ... and the phone company as well.

Good, I have a- a nice basic package, I get most of the game shows and ... uh, the news.

Yeah, yeah yeah.

No, every- everything is- everything is great.

No, no I don't- I- I am tired, but.. A really- yeah, yeah- no the center really has me, uhm ... working hard, but I appreciate what they're trying to do and I appreciate what we're doing together. It's just..

[CHUCKLES] Don't say that, it's- it's, I'm good. I am good, you don't need to worry about me.

Anyway, how's- how's is grandpa?

Oh yeah?

Well tha- yeah that sounds just like him doesn't it?

Nothing wrong with that.

Nothing wrong with that either.

And there's only a little bit wrong with that, so, I don't think that we're too far off from the norm, huh?

Uhm ...

Soon.

Yeah.

No, I've- I've been eating. [VERY QUIETLY] I've been eating.

I am, uh, up to three days a week for that and then I also have group every, uhm, every night, or every- I have it- I have it in the afternoon but by the time I get out it's really dark so, I do that and then I have my individual.

Yeah, yeah of course.

It's ... It's different. It's not a life that I'm used to, and nobody likes anything new. So I just have to do it until it's not new anymore, Until it becomes the norm to be like this.

No, no.

That's right, that's what they're saying, so. And I trust them, they're all great, and I haven't met anybody in the professional staff that I feel like is not going to help or is not trying to help at least, so it's a good fit, really.

No. No, don't- Don't.

If you'd like to, you- you have my address, you can absolutely send me a little care package, but outside of that you don't need to.. I know I absolutely understand.

Okay.

[CHUCKLES] Yeah r-, I- I remember, yes.

Alright that wasn't my fault and we all know it.

Oh my god.

Yeah yeah yeah.

Alright well now is not the time to talk about this. Yes, I am gonna play that card.

Hmhm. Hey if God will it, right? Okay.

Alright, well I will let you go, tell grandpa I said, uh, 'hello, I love you and keep it up'.

Yes, absolutely, hmhm.

Alright, you too, bye bye.

[SOUNDS OF PHONE BUTTONS BEING PRESSED AND PHONE BEING PUT AWAY]

[VINNIE SIGHS AND COUGHS A FEW TIMES FOLLOWED WITH HEAVY BREATHING]

[VINNIE COUGHS VERY LOUD WITH AUDIO DISTORTION AND AUDIO CUTS]

Okay, turn this off-

[ENDS]

[CONVENIENCE STORE]

[VINNIE SIGHS]

[BELL SOUND OF WHEN SOMEONE ENTERS A STORE]

[NOISE IN THE BACKGROUND, VOICES]

[VINNIE SIGHS AGAIN]

[CONSTANT STORE AMBIENCE]

I am convinced, that this, uh, store brand iced tea and some shitty fried food will cure this depression. Uhm, my hypothesis will be tested and validated by the people of this corner store, who will know my usual order.. [SIGH] soon enough unfortunately.

[QUIETLY TO HIMSELF] Alright, let me see. [CHUCKLES] Where am I? Yep. That'll do it.

[SOUNDS OF ITEMS BEING TAKEN, MOVED]

Alright, yeah I'll meet you over here. No take your time.

[ENDS]

[LIVING THE DREAM]

(30 minutes of The Price is Right while Vinny eats cereal, occasionally trying to guess the price)

[COLD TURKEY, a]

Ah, I've been looking for this thing, uhm. It is August, uhm, let me see here ... 16th. Uhm, things have been going good, uh. I had talked about - in group - having uhm, this recorder and how I used to talk to you on it for a little bit, uhm, and everyone thought it would probably be a good idea if I picked it back up even though we talk on the phone and, uhm, all that good stuff. To really get back into the swing of things and sort of keep it as, uhm, like a- an emotion journal, more or less, to- to keep things on track and to listen back if I need to- to put things back into perspective, so. I think that's a good idea, I agree with them on that. Uhm. Group is fine so, yes, I'll do that.

[ENDS]

[COLD TURKEY, b]

The, uh, the good and the bad is always there. You know it's so easy to linger on the extreme, just whichever pull you're currently clinging to. But it is important to let yourself bask in all of it, uhm, I think. Especially when you physically feel like hell. Uh, when things are just going to shit. Knowing that it's either for a better purpose, or even if you're just throwing up your guts and want to die, remembering that someone out there is laughing, or falling in love, or just able to fall asleep. Bringing that balance into scope can give you a happy medium to cling to. You can use it to help- [SOUNDS OF VINNIE BEING UNWELL,] excuse me, raise yourself up. [SLIGHT SOUNDS OF VINNIE BEING UNWELL AGAIN] That baseline - decent - is what I'm clinging to. [SIGHS] Shaking from withdrawal. Throwing up when I try to eat. Barely tolerating water at this point. Knowing that I can one day just be normal and sad. Versus manic and fucking dead inside. That is my light at the end of this tunnel. At this point, you know, at the height of it all, when the walls crawl and I wake up exhausted, I'd always see HIM. Right there. And I don't know if it was because of the substances, or if it was because of me and my fucked up brain chemistry, or some goddamn nightmare.

[SIGHS, SOUNDS OF VINNIE MOVING]

I know I'm just a fucking wreck. They uh- [COUGHS] They say I'm weaning safely. But, my hands are still fucking twitching messes and at the end of the day I know he'll always be there. Watching me. As I fall asleep. If and when that ever comes ... If this is what throwing yourself at a program entails.. I honestly do not know if I am going to make it. This is not what they showed in the brochure, but I need to surround myself with people more I think. People who also want to get better, like me, like my friends from the center. [SIGH] Fuck. Or else, who do I have? My only other constant companion is him.

Jesus, I'm going fucking crazy.

[ENDS]

[FRIENDS & GAMING]

JEFF: [mumbles] It is always my fault. Vin, what are you doing?

VINNIE: Hold on, hold on. I'm just setting it up, gonna get this on record.

EVAN: Oh, you're doing the fuckin' thing agai-

VINNIE: Stooooop! [Evan making weird noises and Jeff saying something] Just, shh! June 7th-

[Evan and Jeff laughing] We're gonna play some nerd shit. Alright we're good.

JEFF: We're good?

VINNIE: Yep.

JEFF: Everybody good-

EVAN: [teasing] You sure you're done?

VINNIE: I'm done!

JEFF: Alright, you guys have at least two dozen goblins after you. You fucked up that first roll.

EVAN: Yeah, you did. You did.

VINNIE: A one's not that bad.

JEFF: ...No.

EVAN: A one is *literally the worst!* That's the worst you can get!

JEFF: Well, did you finish your rolls? Wh- What did it come out to be?

EVAN: Uh, I mean, y'know, we could- we could- we could say it was a twenty, that's fine. We could say it was a twenty.

JEFF: Well you gotta roll [Stammers] the little die, the little ones I gave you.

EVAN: Oh! Uhhh yeah, yeah, yeah, well. One was like a six-

JEFF: Well, do you have any modifiers on it?

EVAN: What's that?

JEFF: Do you have your- Are you even looking at your character sheet?!

EVAN: My what? I know my guy's a-

VINNIE: Oh, shit! I have yours-

EVAN: Ohhhh, that makes more sense, I knew I wasn't a girl! I didn't know *what* was going on here.

VINNIE: [chuckles] It's a Wood Elf. There's a difference.

EVAN: It's a girl Wood Elf whatever the fuck that is. [Vinnie sighs] Makin' shit up over there.

JEFF: We'll see-

EVAN: I wanna be an orc!

JEFF: So needless- So needless to say, the roll didn't go good.

EVAN: Nah! It wh- I mean, I- I'm- I'm big! Whatever, y'know?

VINNIE: I don't think the masters can go to the bathroom. The dungeons- uh- the dungeon guy?

EVAN: ... What?

JEFF: You're both dead. You know, fuck this.

EVAN: What do you mean, we're both dead!

JEFF: You fucked up the roll!

[all three arguing loudly]

EVAN: I didn't finish the roll yet! This is bullshit!

VINNIE: You walked away mid-game-

EVAN: You walked away mid-game!

JEFF: You walked away to play with your little box over there!

EVAN: No, this motherfucker wasn't even paying attention! Goddammit.

JEFF: You're in a tavern.

EVAN: Alright.

VINNIE: Nice.

EVAN: I like that.

JEFF: None of that just happened. [stammering] Do you know if you're a woman or a man this time? [all three laugh]

EVAN: [laughing] Fuck you! I'm a man! A big strong boy! [everyone chuckles]

JEFF: Alright, so I assume that means Vinnie is the, uh-

VINNIE: The Wood Elf.

JEFF: The Wood Elf? Right-

EVAN: [claps] Done! I'm gonna hit on him! [everyone pauses] He walks by, I'm gonna grab his ass. I'm gonna grab your ass.

JEFF: What do you do?

EVAN: What do you do?

JEFF: ... I ask that.

EVAN: Oh! [laughs]

VINNIE: I use my persuasion to wink at him.

EVAN: Nice, does it work?

JEFF: This is getting weird-

EVAN: Does it work?

JEFF: Does it work? What do you roll?

VINNIE: Eleven.

JEFF: You're- You feel a slight disturbance in your pants.

EVAN: I mean, I'm already down to clown. [Everyone laughs] I'm the one that grabbed *his* ass! So—

JEFF: [still laughing] Wait, what is this-

[audio cuts out for a few seconds]

JEFF: -seduced you, but like, you kind of have this like- this weird shit-eating grin, what do you do? What do you do, because he only rolled an eleven, so-

EVAN: So-

JEFF: So- So, you're into it, but-

EVAN: He like- He like, giggled, slightly?

JEFF: Yeah but like-

EVAN: Nice, you're playing coy! You're playing coy with me.

VINNIE: It's how I do.

EVAN: Alright-

VINNIE: It's how I get all the men.

EVAN: Alright- alright-

VINNIE: I'm gonna- I'm gonna- I'm gonna buy him a- What is it, an ale?

JEFF: Yar! What can I do for ye? [everyone starts laughing]

EVAN: WHAT THE FUCK! Is there a pirate in here?!

JEFF: [pirate voice] You're in a pirate tavern! [more laughter]

EVAN: Wait-

[audio cuts out for a few seconds again]

[everyone laughing]

EVAN: I'm gonna get a pint of swill! And I'm gonna pour it all over her shirt!

JEFF: Pint of swill! He slides it down the bar to you.

EVAN: [laughing] I'm gonna slide it back! [everyone laughs] And I'm gonna give him a thumbs up!

JEFF: He slides it to you slowly this time.

EVAN: [laughing] I grab it. I wanna down the whole thing, slam the cup on the ground, put my arm around the new wench, and just go for it! Big sloppy kiss.

JEFF: Wood Elf?

EVAN: Tongue down the throat.

VINNIE: He doesn't have to roll for any of that? I have to- [distressed/affronted] / have to be the one to make all the moves? [everyone laughs]

JEFF: This is weird.

VINNIE: Some fuckin' pirate!

EVAN: Wait! Should I roll for- for- for seduction?

VINNIE: Yeah!

EVAN: I'm a big, disgusting pirate- can I be an Orc? [everyone laughs]

VINNIE: This was already decided- whether or not you were an Orc!

JEFF: [still laughing] Wait wait wait, your character, mid-seduction- [everyone laughs]

VINNIE: [british accent] Excuse me, bar-keep, where is your plastic surgeon?

EVAN: [bad pirate voice] Why are you talking like this? [everyone laughs, vinnie makes a weird-ass noise that might be a laugh]

JEFF: Is that your pirate noise?

VINNIE: That's what they all sounded like.

JEFF: What the fuck was that?

VINNIE: That's what they sounded like.

JEFF: What kinda pirate are you?

VINNIE: It sounds like that kinda bullshit where they just made it up. I mean they used to all go [weird laugh/noise again] [everyone laughs]

JEFF: Wh- Are they lawyers too? [Evan makes a weird noise, and everyone laughs]

VINNIE: I think he's just stalling 'cause he has no game.

EVAN: What do you mean I- I made my moves!

VINNIE: You didn't roll- you didn't roll

EVAN: I made my moves- oh, okay

JEFF: I don't know what page to even look at for this.

EVAN: [dice hits the table] Fifteen. [everyone pauses] Fif-teen! He's sucking my dick! [audio cut]

[Evan and Vinnie laughing]

JEFF: I don't wanna be a part of this anymore.

VINNIE: I told you not to go!

JEFF: No!

EVAN: Go!

JEFF: I'm gonna use the bathroom, I think this is-

EVAN: Aw! This shit's (?)-

JEFF: Let's collect our thoughts , okay?

EVAN: There's somethin' wrong with you, you've been using the bathroom a lot-

JEFF: I might have diabetes. [everyone chuckles]

EVAN: Ahh, shit. [pause] This game sucks.

[cut]

EVAN: I- I have a Stallion, it was a couple of years ago, right? And, uh. A cop pulls me over, and, um. Y'know, I'm- I'm *okay*? I'm a little bit... fucked, but I'm *okay*.

JEFF: Mm, you're a real piece of shit. [both laugh]

EVAN: He pulls me over, the whole "how fast are you goin' thing" and I was like uh, y'know terribly sorry sir. I'm terribly sorry. And y'know he's starting to get a little suspicious by the way I'm acting and then um— I fuckin'. Out of— Out of nowhere. Out of nowhere. I just come up with the brilliant idea to be like, "So did you check out that cool new game that came out?" And he goes—

JEFF: [quietly] 'scuse me sir?

[They both laugh]

EVAN: That's exactly! He goes, "Pardon me sir?" and I go, I go, "It's like a little red guy, or something, and he's jumpin' around on—"

JEFF: Step out of the vehicle. [Jeff and Vinnie laugh]

EVAN: "He's jumpin' around on mushrooms and stuff—" and that's literally what came out! "He's jumpin' around on blocks and runnin' around—" and he knew what I was talkin' about! He was um— What's it called? I fuckin' played it I can't remember what it's called.

VINNIE: Pacman. It's that new Pac—

JEFF: The Pacman? It's The Pacman.

EVAN: Oh it's the Pacman! Yeah yeah yeah! Yeah.

JEFF: Yeah it's the Pacman. I played the shit out of that.

EVAN: Yeah.

VINNIE: How wild is that though?

EVAN: What?

VINNIE: You just have to go to the fuckin' down the block to the— Seven-Eleven.

[CUT]

VINNIE So Dukakis [Weird laugh] Woah!

[Silence]

EVAN: What?

[Jeff laughs.]

EVAN: Who's Dukakis?

[Silence]

VINNIE: Are y— Are you serious?

EVAN: Yeah what's— What's a du— what's a du— Did you make that up? Dukakis. What's a Dukakis?

VINNIE: Yeah. No I did. I made it up.

[Evan and Jeff laugh.]

VINNIE: Guy's named Dukakis [weird laugh again] he's gonna win *for sure*.

JEFF: I dunno if you're fucking with us.

VINNIE: Mr. Du— Mr. Dukus?

EVAN: Win what? Who's Dukakis?

JEFF: Are you doing a bit?

[silence]

VINNIE: He's gonna be the next president of the United States of America. Are we fuckin' serious?

EVAN: I dunno what the fuck you're talkin' about!

VINNIE: Jesus Christ!

EVAN: Wait. Wait. Wait. I'm sorry. Go back to the—

JEFF: What's the platform I'm sorry.

EVAN: Go back to this. There's a man named Dukakis? That's gonna—

VINNIE: He wants to legalize. Um. Um. He wants to—

EVAN: No he doesn't. Yeah. He's full of— You're full of shit!

VINNIE: Yeah he does! He's a democrat!

EVAN: [dumb voice] Oh there's this magical Dukakis who came out of the forest and he wants to legalize everything— everything that we're addicted to duur!

JEFF: Where's he from? Massachusetts?

VINNIE: Maryland. He loves crabs. He has crabs.

[They all laugh]

EVAN: Who doesn't right?

VINNIE: I don't know but I know enough that it's Dukakis and he's gonna be the next president of the United States of America.

EVAN: Jeff didn't you have crabs?

JEFF: Fuck off man.

EVAN: Your hair looks like it has crabs. [Weird laugh]

[Jeff laughing]

EVAN: Can you imagine getting crabs in your beard Vinnie?

[They all laugh]

[inaudible]

EVAN: Does that shit happen? That doesn't happen.

JEFF: That could happen.

EVAN: That's disgusting.

VINNIE: [quietly] That would be lice.

[Jeff and Vinnie talking while Evan goes off]

EVAN: That's disgusting. That's not just lice! That's nut lice, that's what those are! Crabs are

vag lice not regular lice! You can't have nut lice and vag lice on your beard!

VINNIE: Sure you can.

JEFF: Would they go to war?

[They all laugh]

VINNIE: Ooh! Would they meet at the sideburns? That's—

JEFF: The side burns!

EVAN: Would the regular lice fight with the nut lice and the vag lice?!

[All laughing]

JEFF: Throw some spiders into the mix.

EVAN: [laughing] Oh-ho-ho my god!

VINNIE: My face is no longer my own!

EVAN: It's like, uh, what is it, Lord of the Rings!

[Laughing]

EVAN: Oh my god.

JEFF: [quietly] That's disgusting.

[Evan laughs]

VINNIE: So you mean to tell me. That you read the Lord of the Rings.

EVAN: Yeah man!

VINNIE: But you don't know—

EVAN: All of 'em.

VINNIE: Duckus— Dookus— What's his name again?

[All of them laughing]

EVAN: You're drunk! [laughing] You're drunk!

[burp]

JEFF: You don't even know his first name.

VINNIE: George.

JEFF: Nope.

EVAN: Dukakis. Do-cock-is.

JEFF: I dunno his first name.

EVAN: I can't decide if I want to make fun of the dookie part or the cock part. But it's both pretty good.

VINNIE: Or the us. 'Cause it's for all of us.

[Evan chuckling]

JEFF: [quietly] Gross.

VINNIE: Dookie cock for all of us.

[Jeff laughing]

EVAN: Dookie cock for— for all of us! **Dookie cock for every man!**

[Laughing]

[Tape ends]

[THE SUBURBS, a]

[SOUNDS OF INSIDE A DRIVING CAR]

[SIGH] Fuck. This is, uh, this is gonna sound a little weird, uh ... Driving home, it's a little after midnight, I think it's like 12:05.

Uh, I- I... fuck! I know I've been a little, uhm, paranoid lately, and thinking that somebody is following me, but- This fucking- This is just bizarre, there's uh.. Speed limits about 45, I'm doing about 45 and I.. I can see something, like the size of a dog and it uh, it's almost like it's keeping- FUCK! Jesus.. It's alm- It's like it's keeping pace with me. Uh.

Shit. Fuck. [TO HIMSELF] Alright get yourself together, fuck fuck fuck, not possible.

And it's almost, uhm, It's almost like it's going fast enough that it can get ahead of me and sit at the next pole and wait and then dart up to the- ... Shit.

It's not a dog. [QUIETLY] It's gotta be..

OH FUCK!

[PANICKED BREATHING]

[TO SELF] Okay..

[SOUND OF A WINDOW MOVING DOWN, SOUNDS OF WIND]

Uhm, whatever the fuck it is, uh, [NERVOUS CHUCKLE] shit, it just ran right in front of my car. Oh god the lights on its skin. It.. Fuck.. This thing didn't have any fur, uhm, it was grey, it did walk on all fours, it looked.. Wrong. Like it didn't belong on all fours, but fuck it was. Shit.

Alright, uhm, I am just getting home, I am going to have some tea.. I am way overreacting, I'm freaking the fuck out over nothing, it was just an animal. Just a fucking animal, why am I even recording this, it's not a big fucking deal. Alright, chill out. Chill out. Let's just get home. Alright, okay, I'm good, everything's good.

[ENDS]

[THE SUBURBS, b]

You know what's amazing? How, good things can just fall into place sometimes. Finding a small sense of community, of home, even friends. Everything you need, maybe going back to school, grocery stores, my doctor, the center, it's all within walking distance, or at least a short drive if, if I'm feeling adventurous.

Speaking of which, uh, last night, after checking in with the group, uh, I decided to take a drive.. Now, there is a farmland, outside of Princeton that I was driving along. It is really eerie how quickly the small city lights fade and you find yourself passing through woods and then beyond that onto rolling hills and farmland. So, anyway, I'm driving. It's dark. The moon is out and it's very bright. So it's dark, but you can- you can see. Uhm, and to my left, there is a whole wide open field, uhm, looks like, like a field that was maybe harvested, the crops were harvested so it was just empty. Obviously nothing's growing this time of year. So I can see back about, I'd say about half a mile before the- the fog sort of took over. Just a cold, blue field at night, but that's not really what caught my eye. On the right there is a treeline that's very close to the road, uhm, and I usually have my eye there, uhm, because there's deer and they're pretty much constant. Uhm, so something manages to catch my eye, in the dark, on the right. [SIGHS] Everything was either black or.. or a pale grey, but in the moonlight I caught something, almost like .. like deer skin.. skittering through the treeline. I couldn't exactly trace it, and it fucking did not move like a deer. B-but, it was an animal. It wasn't my imagination. But it was big. It looked... Feral. Almost like a starving, trapped animal. Dog maybe? I- I don't- I don't know.

But the really bizarre.. It was keeping pace. Perfectly.. With my car. Huh.

I swear if I could discern a face, or its glare, I could almost guarantee we would've been making eye contact, it staring me down, not breaking away.

Shit.

[ENDS]

[HOME]

Okay, are you recording? Good.

Alright, I am going to shower and get ready for bed [SOFTLY LAUGHS] Uh, This is kind of embarrassing, but I have to admit, on nights like this when I have to uh, drive back from group and drive through the farmland.. I-I think I'm gonna leave this running for a little bit, it's almost like a uh, uh, like a nightlight or a security blanket I guess, it just- I feel so strange I get goosebumps when I walk in on nights like this. It's almost like a companion, when your friends are away. Yeah. That's it. Alright, so, what do I need to do? Let me finish this journal here.

[SOUNDS OF VINCENT WRITING]

And.. Okay. Alright.

[SOUNDS OF WALKING, A DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING]

[WATER RUNNING FROM THE SHOWER FOR A FULL MINUTE]

[WATER STOPS]

[AUDIO CUTS]

[STRANGE METALLIC NOISE]

[SILENCE]

[SOUND OF SOMETHING BEING LOADED, A TAPE INTO A RADIO?]

[SONG STARTS TO PLAY: NEW ORDER - BLUE MONDAY]

[AUDIO CUTS]

[SKIP TO VINCENT YAWNING, AND HUMMING THE SONG]

[SOUNDS OF CLOSET DOORS/DRAWERS OPENING AND CLOSING]

[SOUNDS OF VINCENT CHANGING CLOTHES]

[YAWN] Okay.

[SOUND OF A LIGHT BEING TURNED OFF]

Alright. Goodnight.

[ENDS]

[RUNNING]

[YAWN] Gooooo morning. I am, uh, groggy as hell, but, uh, I wanted to record this as a reminder for myself later. Uh, I had dreams again last night. That I was running. Lots and lots of running.

I'm just looking forward to a quiet night and weekend. And hopefully, some sleep.

[ENDS]

[IT HAPPENED AGAIN]

(Identical to The Suburbs A)

[SOUNDS OF INSIDE A DRIVING CAR]

[SIGH] Fuck. This is, uh, this is gonna sound a little weird, uh ... Driving home, it's a little after midnight, I think it's like 12:05.

Uh, I- I... fuck! I know I've been a little, uhm, paranoid lately, and thinking that somebody is following me, but- This fucking- This is just bizarre, there's uh.. Speed limit's about 45, I'm doing about 45 and I.. I can see something, like the size of a dog and it uh, it's almost like it's keeping- FUCK! Jesus.. It's alm- It's like it's keeping pace with me. Uh.

Shit. Fuck. [TO HIMSELF] Alright get yourself together, fuck fuck fuck, not possible.

And it's almost, uhm, It's almost like it's going fast enough that it can get ahead of me and sit at the next pole and wait and then dart up to the- ... Shit.

It's not a dog. [QUIETLY] It's gotta be..

OH FUCK!

[PANICKED BREATHING]

[TO SELF] Okay..

[SOUND OF A WINDOW MOVING DOWN, SOUNDS OF WIND]

Uhm, whatever the fuck it is, uh, [NERVOUS CHUCKLE] shit, it just ran right in front of my car. Oh god the lights on its skin. It.. Fuck.. This thing didn't have any fur, uhm, it was grey, it did walk on all fours, it looked.. Wrong. Like it didn't belong on all fours, but fuck it was. Shit.

Alright, uhm, I am just getting home, I am going to have some tea.. I am way overreacting, I'm freaking the fuck out over nothing, it was just an animal. Just a fucking animal, why am I even recording this, it's not a big fucking deal. Alright, chill out. Chill out. Let's just get home. Alright, okay, I'm good, everything's good.

[ENDS]

[TRAILHEAD]

The mic on this... Okay.

So, I was walking down Nassau, and this girl is handing out pamphlets. "Zines" as she called them. On the front page, or, uh, the cover I guess, is this big blown up picture of a grey alien with huge eyes, FAKE AS SHIT, mind you, but it caught my attention and it helped that she was extremely cute. So I took one and shoved it in my back pocket. I'm done at the bank, I do my running around and I almost forget completely about her until I sit down to work on some stuff and have coffee at PJ's.

Waitress/girl: Hi, sorry, would you like coffee?

Vincent: Huh? Oh no, I'm fine, thank you.

Yeah, so, I start leafing through this thing and it is surprisingly dense. It is maybe.. ten pages, uh, of very very tiny text. Now, anyway I am looking through this and on the last page is a special little blurb that they dedicate to true crime. I see there, right below some white collar bullshit and minor heists: my name. Vinnie/Vinny. Now, obviously this is not about me, I'm not in trouble and the article brief says it's some podunk town in Pennsylvania that this happened. Now I'm laughing it off and I turn the page to the back cover to check out the rest. And I swear everything stood still.

You know what I see on the back of this thing? I see me on the back cover of this pamphlet. But- but of course it's not ACTUALLY me, but this Vincent, the surviving victim of some creep pastor, who got torn apart by some equally crazy murderer, or animal, or something, was a kid. And he looked JUST like me. It was a splitting image of me as a five year old kid. It's dark now but I swear this is some prank. I don't know if the guys disappeared on me and this is some sick way of trying to say sorry and get back in my good graces- I- I don't know. But I am going to try to find the girl who prints this shit tomorrow, see if she's in on it. Or uh, at the very least, see if she knows what this is about.

[ENDS]

[SHOPPING]

[STORE AMBIENCE, CASH REGISTERS AND PRODUCTS BEING SCANNED]

Man, I guess sometimes you just have to get out and be surrounded by people.

It's especially true when it feels like those closest to you just.. abandon you. You know? Fuck. Even if you're all strangers.. at least you're.. together. We are supposed to be social creatures, right? Isn't that the phrase?

Alright, let's uh.. See here. What do I have on my list? [SIGHS, SOUND OF PAPER]

Milk, alright, cereal, let's back up. [MORE PAPER CRUNCHING SOUNDS]

Perfect. Cereal, cereal, cereal..

Alright, what about, something fresh.. Apples maybe? Yeah.

[SOUNDS OF PLASTIC BAGS BEING RUSTLED]

[FOOTSTEPS]

What else.. Ah, Flintstone vitamins, gotta get those. Holy shit I'm tired. Ah well, at least the Phillies won.

[ENDS]

[HOME LIFE]

[NEWS REPORT/WEATHER REPORT ON TV] ... record heat in the west, Palm Springs , California 150 , Davidsville California 105 and it's record cold in Milwaukee, 18 in Gunnison Colorado and 38 above, ofcourse it is above, it's the middle of Kansas. Now the jet stream, here's that southwesterly flow, sure you know, once in the neighbourhood, but three , [VIN OPENING A FUCKING CAN] we're not going to dry out and stay intermittently wet for several days as the southwest flow will suck it up, so suck up the moisture, so we'll have a little [VIN MAKING NOISE WITH A BAG OF CRISPS LIKE A MADLAD] central park south and at times, right beside the park is going to be, what was it again, a little addition here. This is Noah's Ark, and because of all this rain that we had this summer, this is Noah's Ark, a special exhibit that somebody set up through the Parks Department and generous donations. Sixteen different sculptures of animals, you- [paper rustles] -on how it works, well this is the Ark and midway through the drought in the middle of the pond, and if you see them doing this, maybe- maybe start charging the boat, who knows?

I didn't, watch it guys, You never know what's in the bottom of the water. What I'm gonna do is now, will tell you about the weather, 73 degrees now and extremely humid, humidity almost

100%. We'll take a look at the map and you'll see moisture all over the place, we have it coming from the south, we had it coming up from the south yesterday, and again those tropical downpours in the afternoon ... [CHIPS MUNCHING] ... now with the -

[PHONE RINGS]

Vincent [ANNOYED TONE]: Oh who the fuck?

[SOUNDS OF VINCENT GETTING UP]

... we'll be getting the moisture in from the west and that is not quite as torrential [PHONE RINGS AGAIN] but is steadier also to the lower right of your screen...

Vincent (on the phone): Hello?

..is— hurricane Hugo..

Vincent (on the phone): Hello..?

.. and can we talk about it after a second and come back for our live [VINNIE HANGING UP THE FUCKING PHONE]

Vincent (on the phone): Well whatever.

[HANGS UP PHONE, TWO BEEPS FROM PRESSING BUTTONS]

[SIGHS]

The ark [CHUCKLE] just sank. Well they have a diver here who wants to go in there and uh, and rescue it. Hey live television people, you never know what's gonna work. Let's go to the forecast now and uh, we'll see we're gonna have clouded skies today, humid, showers, not gonna rain all day by any stretch of the imagination. Not as bad as yesterday afternoon and not as bad as tomorrow and sunday is going to be as high as 77.

[VINNIE CHUCKLES]

Tonight light rain and some drizzle, uh low temp is 65-

Vincent: Alright. So it looks like we're supposed to get rain tomorrow huh?

.. and the five days forecast [LOUD SIGH FROM VINNIE] rain tomorrow maybe (8?) time tomorrow afternoon through midnight and into sunday...

Vincent: Yep. [ANOTHER SIGH] Chances are that girl's probably not gonna be there.

..an awful weekend otherwise .. [VINNIE SIGHING AGAIN]

Vincent: No (shaken-down?) lonely nerds looking for some creepy reading material.

[EATING SOUNDS, SOUND OF CAN?]

Vincent: Ah shit. Maybe I will.. catch a movie tomorrow. And then Saturday I'll try my luck, see what's going on there. [SIGH] We're all Princeton's finest, (???)

...just one of the sixteen, seventeen animal sculptures they're gonna be opening on Tuesday for anybody coming down to the science building, gonna be here all Monday, so [VIN CHEWING INTO MY EARS] back here on the water.

[AUDIO CUTS FOR A FEW SECONDS]

[VINCENT AUDIBLY EATING CHIPS THROUGH THE REST OF THE NEWS REPORT]

... let's look at our own weather, we got Jerry (???) right south of the city. (???) miles (???) to the south (???) high pressure deep down in the North and we have some (sunshine) and the rain quits, so that was a very lucky little (???) today, but (???) is gonna last too long because (???) you're gonna see that (???) about midday tomorrow (???) a good tempered (?) rest of the weekend.

(???) 69 degrees and 79% (???)

74 and 67, the high (???) today

(This one needs a lot of work)

[MOVIES]

I, uh, just got out of Pet Sematary and... well, damn. I loved it. Certainly got me thinking about all that weird shit from earlier this week though. And. And that animal. Ugh. Fuck it. It's a beautiful day. I'm going to go for a drive. I'll look for the goth chick later. I'm thinking... I'm thinking Omega Diner. (CAR DOOR CLOSING, RECORDING DEVICE SHUFFLED WITH JACKET ONTO PASSENGER SEAT)

(CAR STARTS, AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A LOCAL LAW FIRM ENDS AND A WEATHER REPORT STARTS, STATING THAT IT WILL BE RIGHT AND SUNNY, HIGH FORTIES)

Huh. I think you're in pretty deep shit if you need help from a lawyer who advertises on the radio. Heh.

(ROCK MUSIC AND AMBIENT TRAFFIC FOR ROUGHLY TWENTY MINUTES. AN AMBULANCE PASSES WITH SIRENS BLARING.)

Oh, shit. God bless.

(VINNY LAUGHS AS THE SIRENS GET FURTHER AWAY. RECORDING STOPS AFTER CAR COMES TO A STOP AND HE PRESUMABLY LEAVES THE CAR.)

(SILENT GAP IN TAPE)

[NASSAU STREET]

(STREET AMBIENCE)

VINNIE: Oh, there she is. Hey! Hey, you, uh, gave me *this* the other day.

“GOTH GIRL” (I assume): Oh! Cool, yeah. Are you a student here? ‘Cause we actually meet every other Saturday. Uh, we’re Cryptozoologists and UFO-chasers-

VINNIE: No no, wait- Look, look. See this kid? [PAPER CRINKLES AS VINNIE PRESUMEDLY SHOWS HER THE FLYER] He, um. Doesn’t this kid look familiar to you?

“GOTH GIRL”: Nnnno. I always think this section is the saddest thing. Like, spooky shit’s fun. But that stuff is.... Real. That’s the real horror. [SHE CHUCKLES AWKWARDLY] But, anyways, uh, here: take our card. We’re sponsored by the student government, so you *could* get a journalism credit if that’s your thing.

VINNIE: Yeah... Thanks anyway.

(MORE STREET AMBIENCE)

Shit. I guess the guys aren’t fucking with me. [HE PAUSES] Maybe I should try and call him, or something. What the *fuck* is the deal with this kid then?

(STREET AMBIENCE, PEOPLE TALKING, CARS HONKING, ETC WHICH THEN TRAILS OFF INTO SILENCE AS THE TAPE ENDS)

[DRIVING]

(SISTER MORPHINE BY THE ROLLING STONES PLAYS AS VINNY DRIVES IN OTHERWISE SILENCE, HE IS HEARD DRUMMING ON THE STEERING WHEEL)

[PJ'S]

(DINER AMBIENCE.)

I'm eating grapefruit with a sprinkling of sugar. Look at me. Healthy eating, I think? Anyway, I found one of the school's publication shouters out there. It was a guy this time, black dude, and I asked him about the little boy, the other Vinny. He shot me a look and asked, "Oh, the killer pediatrician? Yikes." I didn't know what the hell he was talking about. Seems the running theory about this urban legend, the patriarch of that family on the TV, this James Corenthal, killed his kids or something after adopting them from broken homes. The dude didn't seem that interested in this piece of apparent true crime and was more into gnomes or Bigfoot or some shit, but I thanked him and headed here, to PJ's, for breakfast, or lunch? Brunch? To eat.

I'm still giddy. James Corenthal? I fucking heard that name from somewhere before.

[THE VISIT]

[AMBIENCE, NOISE OF WHAT SOUNDS LIKE A FAN]

Rake whispers: Wake up Vinnie ... Vinnie.

[VINCENT SHOOTS AWAKE]

Vincent: HOLY SHIT, What the-, I knew I saw you! Last night! Are you- are you with that other THING?

[SILENCE]

Vincent: Say something, don't fucking nod at me, are you with him?

Rake: There is an agreement.

Vincent: [NERVOUS CHUCKLE AS HE SAYS THIS] What kind of fucking agreement? What ARE you?

[SILENCE]

Rake: Just... checking, I have to watch over you Vinnie.

Vincent: So you're not going to kill me..?

Rake: I'm not going to kill you.

Vincent [QUIETLY]: Why the fuck not?

Rake: I said there is an agreement in place.

Vincent: What does that mean?

Rake: Vinnie I am very old, I've seen many things and I've had my share of fun. And not so much fun. This agreement is very rewarding for me. So I will not even think to disturb it.

(The Rake hurts Vincent)

Vinnie: AH FUCK what was that for? I thought you weren't going to hurt me?

Rake: Explaining, smell, can't you smell that?

Vincent: I smell fucking blood, you fucking cut me.. AH!

(Rake hurts him again)

Rake: You are not mine to take.

Vincent [SCARED, WHIMPERING AND IN PAIN]: What the fuck does that mean..?

Rake: You are tainted. You are marked.

Vincent: So... If you're not gonna kill me, and I'm not yours to take, wh-what? You just came here to tell me that a-and you're gonna leave? And I'm gonna pretend that I can fucking sleep after this?

Rake: I will check in periodically.

[RAKE DISAPPEARS IN THE CLOSET]

Vincent: Wait-wait. FUCK! Where'd you go? Come back, hello?! What the fuck, what the fuck, please be recording, please be recording.

[PICKS UP RECORDER] Oh thank god, oh yeah.. He, oh god [WHIMPERING, CRYING].. He's real. Ah.. He cut me, ahh, FUCK pretty bad.. I don't know if we heard everything on this, I'm gonna go back and check in the morning, but oh fuck, what does that mean?

I'm gonna go sit by the closet. That's where it came from and that's where he went back to.

Fu-

[ENDS]

[AFTER DAWN]

It's been raining since I got up. Raining hard.

(THUNDERCLAP, RAIN ON A WINDOW.)

I don't... I don't think anything will be getting done today. And... and I don't want to jinx anything, but I haven't seen that.. dog in a while. Almost shit myself looking out the window, but it was just the neighbors bone-and-muscle greyhound getting loose and streaking across the street.

But... I did dream of the Man again.

[INSPECTION]

(ROUGHLY TEN MINUTES OF AMBIENT NOISE INSIDE THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES. NO DIRECT NARRATION. SOMEONE IS WHEEZING OUT OF THE IMMEDIATE AREA OF THE RECORDING DEVICE.)

Oh, fuck, I left this thing running--

[ANIMALS]

I read that the county will be culling deer soon. Maybe that's why.. Maybe- I don't know. Maybe the wildlife get all spooked this time of year. Maybe it's just open season and the wolves and

nasty things get a taste of blood in the air. Maybe whatever I saw, the other night, was just some mange-ish) predator. There has to be an explanation for it. A.. a wolf with busted up legs, almost starving to death, its internal clock saying 'hey it's supper time, you HAVE to eat, you HAVE to survive' and getting stir crazy getting closer to pockets of life, running toe to toe... with fucking cars. I don't.. I just happen to cross its path, that's all.

[ENDS]

[STORM IS COMING]

Ah fuck it's 3:47 AM, woke up... Bad fucking dream. Uhm. I couldn't get out of an old building, it was very.. White. Like inorganically sterile. Like a new hospital, that nobody got a chance to use, or some weird prison.

[THUNDER IN THE BACKGROUND]

I had this weird bout of sleep paralysis after I woke up. Like I wasn't completely free of the dream yet.. I'd heard the fading tinkling of a song, like gentle piano keys. A faraway winding/whining sound fading away from me. It was.. It was almost pretty.

But then I felt a draft in my room and I could blink more coherently and then I realized finally that I was awake. I guess my shuffling around activated this thing, because... the click of it recording finally fully [SNAPS FINGERS] brought me to.

I don't have many pictures of my family or friends in my room. [CHUCKLE] Huh, hell I don't have them anywhere in my house.. but I have pictures of this schmuck little kid, my apparent doppelganger sitting at my bedside. I wonder where he is now.

[ENDS]

[MORNING]

[MUSIC IS HEARD ON BACKGROUND]

Ugh this has to be a fucking joke, Jesus. I couldn't sleep, I'm laying there thinking about the goth girl, about the little me-kid and I'm just tossing and turning so I decide alright let me put on the tv. And I'm staring at the ceiling, still trying to fall asleep, when all the sudden I hear my fucking name. I sit up, fix my eyes to the tv and there's the end of a repeat episode of unsolved mysteries. And I hear something like...

News segment plays: [A SECOND VOICE TALKS SOFTLY AT THE SAME TIME] We may not ever know what happened to little Vincent and [SECOND VOICE STOPS] his adopted family, but we can truly [AUDIO GETS DISTORTED AND VOICE GOES REALLY LOW] hope that they escaped whatever [VOICE GOES BACK TO NORMAL, LOTS OF STATIC NOISE] whatever horrors followed them from faraway points across the east coast to a children's home in Ohio, to the loving home of a doctor and his wife. [VOICE GOES LOW AGAIN, GLITCHES IN AUDIO] Vinnie has been missing, but is presumed.. [AUDIO GLITCHES (but probably meant to continue 'presumed dead')] Thank you for watching. [OUTRO MUSIC] Unsolved mysteries.

(A word is heard right after the news segment concluded but can't really make out what)

[AUDIO SKIPS]

It hasn't been this bad since a week without my.. Substances. But I'm fucking giddy, I cannot stop giggling, what the fuck is happening [GIGGLES]. I need to ask that girl what her club or whatever these fucking people are. I know they're not related to me, I don't know what the deal is, but I feel like I met my biological mom or something. [CHUCKLES]

Shit. [BREATHES DEEPLY]

[SOUNDS OF BREATHING, (CRYING?)]

[ENDS]

[BLANK]

(ROUGHLY SEVEN MINUTES OF LOST TIME.)

[FURTHER STUDY, PT I]

I hit a manic streak and, uh, I went over to the princeton library, just, you know started nosing around, you get to (?) use a little computer filing system but, uh, James fucking Corenthal. I was right, he worked at the hospital, found those kids, Vinnie and his siblings, uh step-siblings, excuse me, half-, I don't know, adopted, he'd adopted them at some point at the fairmount children's home in bumfuck Ohio. And then, and THEN, this fucker started travelling the country and apparently after he killed his kids, decided on a whim to just, you know, take a trip. So I look him up in the yellow pages, maybe he had an office, something like that. Got a phone number, and I called it. And I waited and waited and it rang and rang. And then it forwarded to a fucking

lawyer's office, and here's the kicker: it's here, in New Jersey, in Princeton, literally BLOCKS away.

I'm going.

[CUT TO A DOOR OPENING]

Cool old building.

[DOOR CLOSES]

Ah here we go. Hello! Hey there, uh, is mister Davidson in?

Receptionist: Are you recording this?

Vincent: Yeah, uh, s-sorry I'm just hoping I could talk to mister Davidson about a client, a James Corenthal?

Receptionist: William isn't in today and I don't think I can disclose anyone who may or may not be his client. I can take a message?

Vincent: Yeah that's rich. Uh, sure, yeah, you could take a message. Tell him, uh.. Miss? Miss, look-

[FIRE ALARM GOES OFF]

Receptionist: Oh shit, come on get out of here.

Vincent: What the hell is that?

[ENDS]

[FURTHER STUDY, PT II]

Uh. So, I'm across the street from Davidson Law. I was talking to the receptionist and... I saw a fire just.. Creep up on a stack of folders behind her. Folders, envelopes. Shit just went up. I guess in all the confusion, they didn't even finger me for anything once the firefighters and everything showed up. It looks almost fine from the outside. Just a scare, but damn that's going to be a messy cleanup for the reception area.

That was... that was too weird. I'm not done with William Davidson.

(WALKING. CAR DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING. DRIVING)

Hm.

(DRIVING)

SHIT.

(SCREECHING TIRES)

No... oh, fuck no, fuck no, FUCK YOU.

(ACCELERATING CAR, SPEEDING, FRANTIC DRUMMING ON STEERING WHEEL.)

I, I almost hit the, the fucking dog, that thing just leapt out in front of my car and, and stared me down. It knew it was me. I KNOW HE KNOWS ME, IT WAS LOOKING FOR ME. God damn it, godamnit--

[WAKE]

I'm. I'm all sorts of fucked up right now. My head's going a mile a minute. I locked the doors, pulled the blinds. I'm just going... I'm just going to take it easy, hold up, get comfortable.

[CALLBACK]

[RUSTLING. PHONE RINGING]

Hello? Y-Yeah, that's me.

[PAUSE]

What?

[PAUSE]

Hold— Hold on.

[DRAWER OPENING AND CLOSING. RUSTLING.]

Yeah yeah. Mhm.

[MORE DRAWERS AND RUSTLING.]

No go ahead.

[SOUNDS CONTINUE]

Mhm—

[WRITING]

And where was that?

[MORE WRITING]

Uh— Oh. Oh—

[SHORT PAUSE]

Okay.

[EVEN MORE WRITING]

Okay. Yeah.

[LOTS MORE WRITING. LONG PAUSE.]

R- Right. No, I know.

[WRITING AGAIN]

Mhm.

[MORE FUCKING WRITING]

Okay. Okay!

[LITTLE PAUSE]

Hey thanks. I— I dunno what to say..

[SMALL PAUSE]

Uh. Yeah. Yeah I have your number.

[PHONE BEEP]

So— Huh. William Davidson. Even with the, uh, fire and all that— knew I was there. And I don't think I even gave them my name? But still tracked me down after all that. It's weird, he seemed— anxious. But not like he was avoiding. Anxious like he was trying to help the best he could. He let me know that, yes, he is James' lawyer but that it was mistaken about a few things. Although he did say he couldn't tell me much beyond that. Other than James is still actively trying. He's not— He's not a bad man, he said. And although he speaks all over the country, he's still very local to where he worked and lived in Ohio. Alliance, Ohio. Do I— Do I go?

[SMALL PAUSE]

No. No no no. Fuck. That's crazy. Alright, not yet. I'm uh, I'm gonna try to call tomorrow. Yeah. I'll call first, see what I can piece together and from there I'll—

[PAUSE]

What if this— No. This has to do with the fucking tall man, doesn't it?

[SIGH]

I knew I felt too fucking good about all this. This is all some nightmare or a goddamn fever dream or some bullshit I can't shake myself out of. Fuck.

[PAGING DR. GORDON PETERS]

Okay.

[PHONE KEYPAD BEEPING]

Hello, uh, yes, I am a student at Lions Highschool and I am trying to get information for a report.

[PAUSE]

What?— Fuck. Uh, no, no I apologize sorry. Um. Yeah I— I guess I could come in. Could I just get an interview over the phone though?

[PAUSE]

Oh. Um. Yeah I get that, that's not a problem. Um. Alright. Let me— Let me see what— What my parents can do and I'll call you back with their schedule or something. And your name?

[PAUSE]

Doctor— Doctor Peters.

[VINCENT WRITING]

Okay. Okay thank you very much for your time.

[PAUSE]

Oh no, I got it— I got it from the main desk. They said you could help me out with the uh—

[PAUSE]

Yeah. Do you mind if I contact you back here?

[PAUSE]

Great. Alright, thank you Doctor Peters. I will give you a call back once I know what my parents can manage. Thank you very much again for your time.

[PHONE BEEP. DEEP EXHALE.]

Well fuck. I guess I'm going to Ohio.

[LEAVING]

(PANICKING, GATHERING ITEMS, SHUFFLING.)

Yes, just, just tell Davidson that something came up, I have to get out of town for a little while, medical stuff... I feel like I'M GOING FUCKING CRAZY, but, but I'm going to Ohio. Tell William I'm going to see a mutual friend in Ohio, alright? Thank you -- yes, my name is Vinny, I'm his.. I'm a client, thank you!

(PHONE HANGS UP.)

Alright, I don't know exactly what I'm going to do. But I need to get out of this house. I'm either stalked by that fucking tall fuck in my dreams or at night, or, or now that fucking ANIMAL IS CREEPING UP ON ME IN MY OWN BEDROOM. Okay, breathe. Breathe.

If... I think I can get some answers out there, at the children's home. At Fairmount. But... but if something happens to me. I'm leaving my contact information and a... living will of sorts on this tape recorder. Instructions. I'll be okay.

But now, I'm leaving. Good-the-fuck-bye, house.

(DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES, KEYS JINGLE. VINNY BRISKLY WALKING, A CAR DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES.)

[FINDING FAIRMOUNT]

[KNOCKING]
Yes?

Doctor Peters?

Yes.

Hi my name is Vin we spoke on the phone, not sure if you remember me?

Oh yes of course Vincent, a pleasure to finally meet you!

Nice to meet you too. First, I wanna say thanks for agreeing to this meeting. I'm writing an article about your new wing?

Ah yes, yes. We repurposed our old children's wing in order to facilitate the influx of veterans from Desert Storm.

I'm actually glad you brought up the children's ward. Um— I have a few questions just about the history of the ward in general because your facility has always spearheaded, um, mental health applications—

Yes. Yes. We take great pride in that.

[CUT]

Particularly I'd like to ask a few questions about Doctor James Corenthal just to start, um, I

know he was at one point he was under your employment—

Yes he was but he is no longer. Uh— We do not associate ourselves with him.

And uh— Why is that?

Is this why you came here? To ask me about Doctor Corenthal?

No this is— this is absolutely about the hospital and the new p— and the uh, the new program that you are um— um— that you started, uh, within the—

[VINCENT BEGINS CHOKING]

Just— take a breath.

[VINCENT'S CHAIR LOUDLY SCOOTS BACK AND HITS THE FLOOR]

Just relax— Oh my lord. Nurse! Nurse!

[VINCENT CHOKING AND FOOTSTEPS]

Oh my god, what's coming from his eyes?

Never mind that! Get— Get the doctors.

[FOOTSTEPS LEAVING]

Can you hear me? Oh good lord..

[STATIC AND AUDIO DISTORTION]

Time of death 6:45 PM. Nurse, I'm gonna need you to get a sheet on him.

What happened to him?

I have no idea. Some kind of seizure or stroke. He ingested all of that— and vomited it back up. I'm not entirely certain.

Well what should we do with this? It says return to William Davidson.